

TRANSFORMING CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT FOR HOLISTIC LEARNING: EXPLORING INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN RURAL SCHOOLS OF MPIKA DISTRICT, ZAMBIA.

**A case study of six Rural
schools in Mpika District.**

BY

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THE PROBLEM AND WHY IT MATTERS. BEYOND EXAMS: THE NARROW ASSESSMENT TRAP IN RURAL ZAMBIA

- ▶ **Over reliance on standardized tests**
- ▶ **Neglect of skills**

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- ▶ **Rural constraints: Resources, teacher training, infrastructure**
 - ▶ **Impact: limits holistic development and equity**
 - ▶ **Exam-dominated assessment culture**
 - ▶ **Structural and cultural barriers**
 - ▶ **Gap between national policy and rural practice**

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- ▶ **General: Explore innovative assessment for holistic learning**

- ▶ **Specifics**
 - 1. Examine current practices and barriers**
 - 2. Identify local strategies**
 - 3. Recommend reforms**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- ▶ **Qualitative case study: capturing Voices from the Ground.**
- ▶ **Research design**
- ▶ **Qualitative approach- in depth case study(6 months)**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

continues.....

► **Sample size**

**6 schools, 6 head teachers, 30
teachers, 120 learners.**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

continues....

► Data collection

**Interviews, Focus Groups,
Observation, Documents(teacher
diaries)**

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- ▶ **Thematic Analysis. with ethical considerations**

Triangulation of observation notes, FDG's and diaries.

Key Findings – Current Practices

- ▶ **High-stakes exams dominate**
- ▶ **CASS implementation is superficial**
- ▶ **Rankings and promotions tied to exam results**
- ▶ **Collaboration and creativity is low**

KEY FINDINGS – BARRIERS TO INNOVATION

- ▶ **Lack of training and resources**
- ▶ **Overcrowding and material shortages**
- ▶ **Cultural resistance to non-exam assessments**

KEY FINDINGS – INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

- ▶ **Oral storytelling and folktales rubrics**
- ▶ **Community-judged market days**
- ▶ **Peer assessment - Practical tasks**
- ▶ **Project based tasks**

Results: Increased engagement and skill development

DISCUSSION

- ▶ **Policy-practice disconnect**
- ▶ **Exams deeply embedded in rural expectations**
- ▶ **Indigenous methods are effective and relevant**
- ▶ **Teachers drive innovation- teacher transformation(shift in mindset)**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ **Localize CASS**
- ▶ **Use low-cost, culturally appropriate materials**
- ▶ **Teacher peer-learning circles**
- ▶ **Involve community in assessment**
- ▶ **Promote awareness**

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- ▶ **Amend CASS to integrate oral/practical methods**
- ▶ **Recognize indigenous knowledge**
- ▶ **Support teacher development with local tools**

CONCLUSION

- ▶ **Holistic assessment essential for equity**
- ▶ **Need structural, cultural, pedagogical reform**
- ▶ **Rural innovations show viable paths forward**

THANK YOU